

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY**

**RE: PETITION OF BAY STATE GAS COMPANY  
FOR APPROVAL OF REVISED TARIFFS**

**DTE 05-27**

**SUPPORT FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL'S MOTION FOR ORAL ARGUMENT (AND  
ADDITIONAL REQUEST FOR ORAL ARGUMENT)  
FROM LOCAL 273, UTILITY WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO**

Local 273 of the Utility Workers Union of America ("Local 273") supports the Attorney General's "Motion for Oral Argument Before the Commissioners" and additionally moves that Local 273 also be allowed to make oral argument before the Commissioners. The Attorney General filed his motion on June 6, 2005, and the hearing officer allowed parties five days to respond. In his motion, the Attorney General emphasized unique aspects of this case which merit the granting of the request.

Local 273 agrees with the arguments in support offered by the Attorney General and also offers these additional points. First, oral argument will facilitate the Department's deliberations in this case. The Company has filed the testimony of nine witnesses. The Attorney General, Division of Energy Resources and Local 273 have already filed notices of intent to sponsor six more witnesses. This case is likely to have a very large record raising a broad range of challenging legal and factual issues. The work of the Commissioners will be made easier to the extent that each party can focus the Commission's attention on the issues that are of paramount

importance to that party and can direct the Commission's attention to the most relevant portions of the record.

Second, Local 273 contends, and will introduce supporting evidence during this case, that Bay State's merger with NiSource has had a range of deleterious effects for the company's customers and that this particular company merits the closest level of scrutiny by the Department. Therefore, whether or not the Commissioners believes that it is generally advisable to allow oral argument at the conclusion of a rate case, Local 273 asserts that the circumstances of this particular company merit the time that would be required for the Commissioners to hear oral argument.

Third, Local 273 is aware that other utility regulatory commissions regularly assign one or more commissioners to sit on the hearings in a case, or regularly allow oral arguments to the commissioners at the close of a case, or otherwise provide for public participation prior to a final ruling. Local 273 respectfully suggests that these procedures facilitate commission deliberations while also promoting public participation in proceedings before utility regulatory agencies. The Department should allow for oral argument in this case to advance these goals.

In conclusion, Local 273 urges the Department to grant the Attorney General's motion for oral argument. If the motion is granted, Local 273 asks that it also be allowed the opportunity to make oral argument, of no more than 20 minutes

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Respectfully Submitted,

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